

Taking Care of Mental Health During the Pandemic



Introduction: Life is a dynamic process that begins at birth and ends at death, during the course of our lives we will experience physical emotional and psychosocial changes that can impact our mental health and our ability to cope.

This pandemic is a change that was not expected and most people in the world was not prepared for its effects, making it difficult to cope with the stressors brought by having to social distance, wear masks and making changes in the activities of daily living.

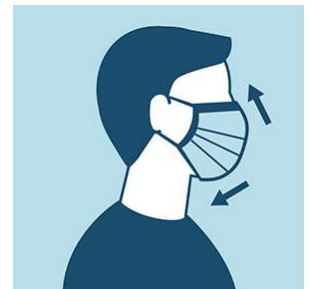
Most affected are children who depend on adults to survive as well as the elderly who may also depend on others to meet their basic needs.

People who are living with chronic physical and mental health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease cancer, HIV depression, anxiety, dementia alzheimers are also vulnerable.

Young adults may have also had to be dealing with their own stressors such as having no full time jobs, being single parents and having financial difficulties, poor family and social support, having to cope with their own illness or that of a child, having to take responsibility for parents who are disabled, having poor coping skills.

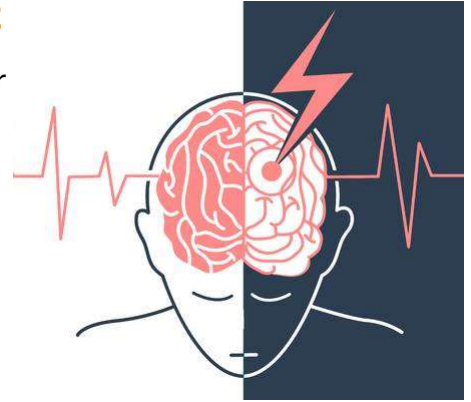
Changes Due to the Pandemic

- Social Distancing
- Wearing masks in Public
- Closing of places of worship and recreational activities
- Not being able to make close contact with family and friends.
- Having to be vigilant to decrease risk of contracting the virus by frequent washing of hands, disinfecting surfaces and being physically distant when in the public.
- Lockdowns and quarantine as well as layoffs from jobs
- Being restricted from traveling by air.
- Restrictions in gathering when there is a death in family.
- Sudden loss of loved ones
- Changes in Relationships
- Using of substances and more medications presently taken.



Emotional and Physical changes due to Pandemic

- Worry or fear of contracting the virus, worry about your own health and that of your family.
- Changes in sleep and eating patterns
- Difficulty concentrating or sleeping which can worsen health problems.
- Physical aches and pains, such as headaches, stomach problems
- Anger or irritability and other changes in mood, sadness, crying or keeping to oneself.
- Feeling alone and lonely.
- Feeling tense and nervous.
- Biting nails or pacing.
- Neglecting self and other responsibilities
- Feeling helpless and hopeless.



Taking Care Of Your Mental Health is Essential

- ✓ Be aware of what you are feeling learn how to adapt and adjust and make changes that is within your control:
- ✓ Share feelings with family and friends
- ✓ Get regular exercise (Youtube) Donovan Gordon, Ann Pringle Burrell
- ✓ Get enough rest and sleep
- ✓ Take breaks from watching news
- ✓ Stay connected with family and friends via social media, face times, family and friends check in, phone calls
- ✓ Engage in activities enjoyed such as: listening to music, gardening, journaling, watching or listening to spiritual music, dancing, starting a new hobby.
- ✓ Eat healthy balanced meals
- ✓ Practice deep breathing and relaxation, meditation.
- ✓ Appoint a family member or trusted friend to engage in online shopping , paying bills



on your behalf.

- ✓ Seek social support from family and friends other community support.
- ✓ Take a walk in your yard or if possible in nature.
- ✓ Take long cold or warm baths
- ✓ Avoid the use of alcohol , caffeine, overuse of medications being used.
- ✓ Being thankful and grateful for what we still have.
- ✓ Make sure to take medications as ordered by the Dr for your mental or physical problem to prevent relapse.
- ✓ Maintain physical distance when in public, wash hands regularly or sanitize, especially when handling money, cough or sneeze into your elbow or tissue and discard into a bin.
- ✓ Stay home and only go out if absolutely necessary.



TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IS A PRIORITY.

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